



NOT FOR NAVIGATIONAL PURPOSES



## **ONOTA LAKE**

(Pittsfield)

### **General Information:**

This 617-acre soft-water pond lies just beyond the city limits of Pittsfield. Due to its location, it is very heavily used by anglers, swimmers, water skiers and sailors. Even so the lake is in very good condition with a transparency of about 17 feet. Maximum depth is 66 feet; average depth is around 22 feet. Aquatic vegetation is abundant and very dense in areas that are less than 10 feet deep. The northern coves are particularly weedy. About 25% of the shoreline is protected within the boundaries of a city park, another section is owned by a hospital. Development is primarily limited to the northeast and southwest ends of the lake.

There is a double concrete boat ramp and parking lot located on the southeast shore about 1/3 of the way from the southern end. To get there, take Lakeway Drive to Burbank Park from Valentine Drive. The ramp is suitable for virtually any class of trailer boat and there is adequate parking for 75 vehicles. There is also a cement-fishing pier located in one of the better fishing areas.

### **Fish Populations:**

This lake has exceptional diversity of fish populations. Northern pike, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, brown trout, chain pickerel, yellow perch, white perch, bluegill, pumpkinseed, black crappie, rock bass, brown bullhead, white sucker, carp, golden shiner, common shiner and rainbow smelt. There are also reports of white catfish. Bonus broodstock Atlantic salmon (some weighing more than ten pounds) in the spring.

### **Fishing:**

The dominant fishery here involves the catchable trout. The MDFW stocks thousands of trout for put and take fishing every spring and fall. Most of these trout are caught within a month or two following their release, but Onota has long been known for its ability to produce trophy brown trout. As a result it has been designated as special brown trout water, with a 15 inch one per day limit on browns. This is done to enhance the ability to produce trophies. The bonus salmon provide another outstanding opportunity to catch a trophy and will continue to be stocked as long as they are available.

Northern pike fishing is very popular during the winter. Onota does not produce many pike, but it has a reputation for breaking state records for the species. While the fishing for pickerel, bass, yellow perch and sunfish is good, most of the harvest occurs along with the pike and trout fishing. Carp fishermen should target this lake; a new state record is probably swimming in its depths.

September 1993